

Improving the Digital Skills of Young Voters Through Education to Prevent Election Hoaxes Using the Kalimasada Mafindo Application

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Abstract

The practical training on fact-checking using Kalimasada Mafindo was conducted to improve digital literacy and participants' ability to counteract the spread of hoaxes about elections. This training was held on 2 July 2024 at the Village Hall Hall, attended by young voters and village officials in Panca Mukti Village who were enthusiastic about understanding the importance of information verification in the digital era. The resource person or facilitator of this activity is Mafindo Volunteers, who are certified in the Fact Check. The training material includes an introduction to Kalimasada as one of the tools in the fact-checking process, techniques for identifying false information, and steps to verify data through credible sources. The participants showed positive and interactive responses during a practice session with the Kalimasada chatbot with the WhatsApp 085921600500 number, where they successfully used Kalimasada to verify the correctness of information quickly and accurately. The final evaluation showed that participants understood the concept of fact-checking and had adequate ability to apply it in daily life to combat disinformation, significantly ahead of the 2024 Pilkada.

A. Introduction

In the 2024 election, the rate of dissemination of information disruption is quite high and worrying. The results of the 2024 Election Mitigation Survey conducted by CSIS in 2023 showed that almost half of the population of 1,320 respondents believed in information interference. The public's vulnerability to information disruption is still worrying, and it can accelerate the spread of information disruption (Fadilurrahman et al., 2021; Hafel, 2023).

Amid the high spread of information disorders, most people are unaware that information disorders are an organized movement. The high influence of misinformation has many adverse effects on democracy and elections, namely, weakening public support for democracy and lowering public trust in election organizers and the integrity of election administration (Khan & Idris, 2019; Prathama et al., 2022). Thus, mitigation to combat the spread of information disorders is still a challenging task ahead. Digital literacy programs have not been fully effective in reducing public trust in information disruption (Leaning, 2019; Machin-Mastromatteo, 2021).

Meanwhile, young voters are a vulnerable group in analyzing information (Jamil & Burhanuddin, 2024). With a large number, the characteristics of adolescents as young voters are very close to digital media such as social media (Andriyendi & Dewi, 2023). Social media is considered a powerful weapon to attract novice voters as a communication platform with the community (Hidayat, 2020; Rohman, 2023).

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Campaign strategies using social media such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Telegram and the like are expected to be a bridge between the candidates in the election and their prospective constituents (Bossetta, 2018; Shaleh & Raihana, 2021). The number of novice voters in Indonesia in the 2024 election will amount to 428,799 people. We see that social media use distribution is very high in Indonesia, including in Bengkulu Province. Of course, it is not only users in the city but has spread to the village community. One of them is young voters in Panca Mukti Village. Panca Mukti Village is located in the Pondok Kelapa District area, situated to the south of Central Bengkulu Regency with a distance of about 35 km, but closer to the capital of Bengkulu Province, which is approximately 15 km away. Around 8% of the population is aged 15-19 years, so it is very strategic to be the target of this activity.

Thus, the spread of information disorders (hoaxes) needs to be solved as mitigation. One of the organizations in Indonesia that is engaged in public education and fact-checking is Mafindo. In addition, to make it easier to counter hoaxes, young voters need to be equipped with the ability and tools to check facts, namely with Kalimasada Mafindo. A tool that is easy to use as a chatbot determines the truth of information, including election information.

B. Methods

The training on understanding Kalimasada Mafindo was carried out with the cooperation/collaboration of Mafindo volunteers in the Bengkulu Region as facilitators/resource persons for training. In general, the pattern applied in the implementation of the training for young voters is interactive because in addition to the theoretical understanding provided, the practice of using Kallimasada is also carried out. The activity method was carried out using the participatory fun education method, with the following methods:

1. This training method is peer group training, which is to provide material through a small group with one facilitator and demonstrate directly with props. This activity also included discussions and recommendations for resolving cases related to political hokas, especially about the 2024 elections that have passed and ahead of the 2024 Regional Elections. Teaching aids are prepared such as stickers, videos and quizzes for participants so that the training conditions run actively.
2. Mentoring. This method will be facilitated by the service team in the form of a WhatsApp group by including all participants including facilitators for 3 weeks. This training activity supports the digital literacy movement from the Ministry of Communication and Informatics, this activity will involve MAFINDO (Indonesia Anti-Defamation Society) Bengkulu Region as a facilitator, so that training tools and materials and tools will be fully used during the training. The number of certified facilitators from Mafindo as many as 2 people will be involved in this activity. The names of Facilitators Mafindo Hartanto and Salju Qurrata Ayyun.

The target audience in this training activity is determined by criteria (purposive sampling). The selection of participants in Panca Mukti is based on several criteria:

- 1) Young voters, aged 17-20, have exercised their right to vote in the 2024 General Election in February.
- 2) Young voters who have experienced the spread of hoaxes through social media.
- 3) Young voters who are willing to participate in full training and mentoring.

C. Results and Discussion

The implementation of the training began with the opening and direction from the Service Team, namely Dr. Gushevinalti. After that, it continued with an introduction from the Mafindo realist, with the introduction of the Mafindo Organization by Hartanto Volunteers and Salju Qurrata Ayyun, and then entered the core material. The service team will write a report on the material from the resource person and an in-depth analysis of the activity material. Kalimasada Fact Check Application by Mafindo.

Kalimasada is the protector of the Truth of Mafindo. In the fast-paced and digital information era, the spread of fake news or hoaxes is a big challenge that the public must face. Mafindo, Masyarakat Anti Fitnah Indonesia, has developed its latest innovation, the Kalimasada fact-checking application. Kalimasada is a technology-based application designed to verify the correctness of information circulating in the community.

One of the crucial moments when Kalimasada was significant was during the election period. Elections are the foundation of democracy that requires participation and accurate information from the public. Hoaxes related to elections can damage the integrity of the democratic process, negatively affect public opinion,

and threaten social stability (Khan & Idris, 2019). As a first-time voter, it is essential to recognize election hoaxes to make wise decisions. The public can effectively reduce the negative impact of hoaxes and ensure that the information circulating is accurate and trustworthy (Isbandono et al., 2024; Suri & Yuneva, 2021).

Young voters play an increasingly important role in the electoral process in this digital era. The younger generation, who grew up with technology at their fingertips, has the potential to change the dynamics of elections in an unprecedented way. However, they must be equipped with adequate digital skills to realize this potential. Digital proficiency is not only about the ability to use electronic devices but also the ability to access, understand, and evaluate information critically (Diazzaki & Mubarak, 2024).

With the rise of fake news and misinformation, digital literacy has become essential for young voters to filter the correct information from the wrong.



Figure 1. Practice or Simulation of Kalimasada Mafindo with Election Information Cases

Digital prowess allows young voters to actively engage in political discussions on social media and other online platforms. They can share opinions, discuss with others, and influence public opinion. This active participation not only enriches political discussions but also increases their awareness and involvement in the democratic process.

Young voters in Panca Mukti Village must be empowered when interacting with social media, especially in the fast-paced information era full of various kinds of content that circulate every second. The ability to sort and choose the correct information is essential, as their election decisions can be influenced by what they see and read on social media. One effective way to empower yourself in dealing with misinformation is to use reliable fact-checking tools, such as Kalimasada, developed by Masyarakat Anti Fitnah Indonesia (MAFINDO).

When young voters in Panca Mukti Village use social media, they are often exposed to sensational news, unverified claims, and various information that can be misleading. Social media provides easy access to information but also carries risks if the information is not adequately verified. This is where the ability to use fact-checking tools such as Kalimasada is essential. This application is designed to assist users in ascertaining the correctness of the information they find so that they are not easily influenced by hoaxes or fake news.

By using Kalimasada, young voters can be more confident that the information they receive is correct. The fact-checking process becomes more accessible and faster by entering keywords or links of information you want to check into the application. Kalimasada will display the results of the fact check conducted by MAFINDO, providing a detailed explanation of the truth or error of the information. Thus, young voters are not only passive consumers of information but also active in ensuring that the information they receive and disseminate is accurate.

In addition, using Kalimasada can also increase the critical awareness of young voters toward information sources. They will be more accustomed to checking news sources and more selective in trusting information circulating. This habit is essential to build so they are not easily influenced by propaganda or black campaigns that often appear during elections.



Figure 2. Speaker Hartanto is Explaining the Reason for the Spread of Hoaxes

Furthermore, young voters who are empowered by using social media and fact-checking tools will be able to contribute positively to their environment. They can be agents of change by spreading the correct information and educating their friends and family about the importance of verifying information.

Empowering young voters in Panca Mukti Village by interacting with social media also reflects their ability to make better decisions. They will be more confident in choosing because their decisions are based on verified and trustworthy information. This is very important in the democratic process, where every voice has a role in determining the country's future.



Figure 3. Practice or Simulation of Kalimasada Mafindo with the Election Information Case

Thus, young voters in Panca Mukti Village must continue to strive to empower themselves when interacting with social media. Fact-checking tools such as Kalimasada from MAFINDO are one of the concrete steps they can take to ensure that they not only get the correct information but also play an active role in maintaining the integrity of information circulating on social media.

D. Conclusion

Digital proficiency is an essential skill that young voters must have in elections. With these skills, they can access a broader range of information, counteract misinformation, actively participate in political discussions, and use technology to amplify their voices. In this increasingly digital world, digital proficiency is critical to ensure that young voters' voices are heard and respected in every election.

Kalimasada Mafindo is a handy tool for digitally literate novice voters to avoid misunderstandings and misinformation. With the ability to verify information quickly and accurately, Kalimasada Mafindo can help novice voters filter out the truth from fake news that often circulates on social media and other online platforms. Digitally literate novice voters can use Kalimasada Mafindo to verify information, improve digital literacy, participate in informed discussions, and build trust.

Thus, young voters from Panca Mukti Village can make Kalimasada Mafindo one of the essential tools digitally literate novice voters can use to avoid hoaxes, increase digital literacy, and participate more effectively in the democratic process.

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